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Summary

THE ROLE OF CHEST X-RAYS WHEN SCREENING FOR LATENT TUBERCULOSIS INFECTION IN PATIENTS WITH INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE BEFORE STARTING BIOLOGIC TREATMENT

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IBD

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A retrospective cohort study of 520 IBD patients in Denmark found that chest X-ray did not identify any latent tuberculosis cases that were missed by QuantiFERON-TB testing when screening before biologic therapy initiation.

KEY POINTS

- Among 520 IBD patients screened between October 2017 and October 2022, no patient had a negative QuantiFERON-TB test combined with a tuberculosis-suspect chest X-ray.
- Eight tuberculosis cases were identified in the cohort, and none were detected based solely on chest X-ray findings.
- The study population was low-risk for tuberculosis with few risk factors for false-negative QuantiFERON results except concurrent glucocorticoid treatment and inflammatory activity.
- The authors conclude that in low-endemic populations, the benefits of adding chest X-ray to QuantiFERON-TB testing are limited and unlikely to justify the test burden, radiation exposure, and cost.
- The study may be relevant to clinicians developing tuberculosis screening protocols for IBD patients in low-prevalence settings before biologic initiation.

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